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FORT COLVILLE 1859 TO 1869.

The attempted settlement of the Indian difficulties by Governor I. I. Stevens, by treaty or otherwise, resulted in the sending of United States troops to Walla Walla in the fall of 1856, and in locating of the present post where it now stands, in the spring of 1857, but the continued unfriendliness of the Indians; the killing of miners, stealing from settlers, and the petitioning of the citizens of Colville Valley for protection, induced Lieutenant-Colonel Steptoe in May, 1858, to start for Colville Valley with about one hundred and sixty men on what was intended as a peaceful mission, for they left the sabres and ammunition of his command in Walla Walla.

On the 16th day of May, the Indians met Colonel Steptoe and his command near Rock Lake, and told him they must go back. The next day on account of the numbers and hostile actions of the Indians, they started to return, and at or near Pine Creek the Indians attacked them, and there was a running fight for several hours, during which two officers and several soldiers were killed, and they were forced to halt and camp, from which they fled during the night under the guidance of a friendly Nez Percé Indian to Snake River, and thence to Walla Walla, leaving all their camp outfit, pack train, howitzers, medical stores, etc.

During the next two months Colonel George Wright organized a force at Walla Walla to punish the Indians for their attack on Lieutenant Colonel Steptoe. About the same time, a party of one hundred and sixty-seven miners, traders and packers, knowing of the defeat of Colonel Steptoe by the Spokanes, and of Major Haller by the Yakimas, heedless of the danger, under the guidance of David McLoughlin, son of Dr. McLoughlin of the Hudson Bay Company, started from Walla Walla July 21st, 1858, for the newly discovered gold fields of Fraser River, crossed Snake River, journeyed over the plains of the Big Bend to the Columbia River, opposite the mouth of the Okanogan, without very serious trouble, losing only one man, who lagged behind. Here the Indians told them, if they crossed the River, they would have to fight. This did not deter them, for after a parley and a talk with Francois Desotel, the agent of the Hudson Bay Company, they crossed the Columbia, organized an advance guard under Francis Wolff, and went three days journey up the Okanogan River, without seeing an Indian, but on nearing the McLoughlin Canyon, a narrow pass, with almost perpendicular walls, the trail indicated the presence of Indians, and the com-

mand closed up. The advance guard started into the Canyon, but soon discovered an ambuscade and lost three killed and as many wounded. All but the advance guard retreated to the river. While the advance men were holding the Indians, the others made rafts, crossed the river, followed by the men who had been fighting, and then they went around the Indians, north into British Columbia, and on the Fraser River. Shortly after this, Sept. 1, 1858, Colonel Wright met the allied tribes that had defeated Colonel Steptoe on the Spokane plains, and beat them, without loss to his command, after which the Indians asked for peace. During August of this same year, Major Garnett was hunting and fighting Indians in the Yakima Valley, who in June before had attacked a party of miners, killing and robbing them. He was fairly successful in either killing, capturing or driving the guilty ones out of the country, some of whom fell into Colonel Wright's hands to be executed on the Spokane. In addition to this, it was reported that the Hudson Bay Company was and had been furnishing the Indians with guns and ammunition. Under these conditions, as existing in 1858, it was deemed wise to carry out Colonel Steptoe's idea, by establishing a post between the Spokanes and Okanogans. To this end, in the Spring of 1859, several companies of the 9th United States Infantry were sent into the country, two companies going to Colville Valley under Major Pinkney Lougenbeel. The military settled on the flat, near Mill Creek, about three miles from the Colville River, and commenced at once to build a four-Company post out of hewn logs. Hiram Fields was superintendent of the building and John Day the boss carpenter. R. H. Douglass and John Nelson had built a saw mill in 1857-8 at the Falls on the Creek, about three miles below where the Fort was located. Major Lougenbeel endeavored to make a contract with them for lumber, offering $20 per thousand feet, or for the rental of the mill, he to furnish logs and labor. Douglass & Co., thinking their opportunity had arrived, asked $40. The result was the Major built a dam about a half mile above the Fort, put in a saw mill, cut what lumber the Post required, and afterwards leased the mill, and the settlers were thus able to buy lumber at $10 per thousand. At the time Major Lougenbeel went to Colville, J. J. Archer, commanding Company C, and Captain Frazier, commanding Company I, went to Okanogan Valley to protect Captain John G. Parke, of the American Boundary Commission, and they scouted over that section all summer, then in the fall went to Fort Colville to find the post practically built, and as one

of the men wrote me, "Winter was drawing nigh and the men needed quarters, and we pitched in and helped build them." These four Companies wintered at the post, as did the Engineers headed by Captain Parke of the American Boundary Commission, who had charge of locating the 49th parallel, the international line.

Captain Parke attained the rank of Major General during the war of the Rebellion. That same year, 1859, the British Boundary Surveyors, under Colonel Hawkins, located their quarters on the south side of the Columbia River, about fifteen miles from the American Post, and built comforable log houses to shelter his command of sappers and miners. The place is now occupied by the town of Marcus, and only one of the original houses is still standing. The American and British Engineers worked conjointly in locating the Boundary line.

On August 6th, 1861, Captain Parke sold such supplies as he had belonging to the American Boundary expedition, and started for the States, and on April 4, 1862, Colonel Hawkins did the same for the British, abandoning his buildings, and started for England via Walla Walla.

The four Companies of the 9th United States Infantry occupied the Post of Fort Colville until the Spring of 1861, when two companies, those of Captain Frazier, Company C, and of Captain Archer, Company I, were ordered East to take part in the war of the Rebellion. Both these Captains, with Captain Fletcher and Lieutenants Harvey and Wickliff, resigned, and joined the Confederate forces.

November 17, 1861, Major James F. Curtis, 2nd Infantry, California Volunteers, with Companies C and D, commanded by Captains Hull and O'Brien, relieved Major Lougenbeel, and he and his command went at once to Walla Walla. About the first order Major Curtis made was the dismissal of the Post Sutler, Charles R. Allen, on November 22nd, 1861, which read, "Sir: You are dismissed as Sutler from this post for your unqualified secession principles." Major Curtis was on May 9, 1864, promoted to Colonel of the Fourth Regiment of Infantry of California Volunteers.

Some of Major Curtis' Command were a bad lot. They were reported to be the jail birds of San Francisco. Besides getting drunk, they would fight and steal and kill. Within four days of their arrival they ran off the Chinamen from the only wash house in town, stole the clothes, leaving most of the citizens with only what clothing was on their persons. February 8, 1862, Lieuten-

ant John M. Henry came to the town and killed John Burke in cold blood with a common butcher knife. The coroner's inquest found Henry guilty of murder. Major Curtis confined Henry to his quarters for about twenty days, and then on account of some criticism by citizens turned him over to the Sheriff, Francis Wolff. The nearest jail being four hundred and seventy miles at Vancouver, he took him to his house on his farm, and kept him until Spring, when Henry demanded a hearing before a Justice of the Peace. At the examination, on account of the intimidation of the soldiers, no one appeared to prosecute, and he was discharged, and left the place. It was reported some months later that he was killed in a row in California.

February 22, 1862, was the time of a great event—the ball given by the California Volunteers. Everybody in the Valley was invited, including the officers and men of the British Boundary Commission. Over four hundred were present, of whom about one hundred and fifty were the women of the Valley, native and mixed bloods and half a dozen white women, being all of the town and country and fort. Major Curtis and his officers were in full dress uniform, very hospitable, saw that all had attention, a good supper and an enjoyable time. The ball room was one of the Company quarters, a log building about 25x100 feet. It was artistically decorated. At each end over the fire places were rosettes of sabers and guns flanked by the American and English flags. The sides were covered with flags and bunting, and the room was lighted by immense chandeliers made of bayonets fastened to hoops forming cones and pyramids, with a candle in the socket of each bayonet.

March 26, 1862, Lieutenant Wing, of the California Volunteers, committed suicide by shooting himself, placing the muzzle of the pistol in his mouth, the ball coming out the back of his head.

The first use made of the beautiful marble of which the Valley has such a great variety and abundance, was a slab marking his grave.

April 21st, 1862, Major Curtis came with his command to the town, went to John Shaw's distillery, took the worm of the still out and up to the Fort, knocked all the barrels of whiskey in the head, and ordered every one in town not to sell liquors to any one, which order was obeyed. The character of some of the men in his command was such that life and property were not safe when they were drinking. The order was obeyed, not only because it was an order, but for self protection.

July 11, 1862, Major C. H. Rumrill, with two Companies of the Washington Territory Volunteers, Company C, commanded by Captain C. A. Glasure, and Company B, commanded by Captain S. W. Shulock, relieved Major Curtis, who with his command went to Fort Vancouver.

November 3, 1862, the order of Major Curtis of April 21st, 1862, stopping the sale of liquors was suspended by order of Major Rumrill, and whiskey selling was again permitted. It may be apropos to say that during the prohibition the setlers expended about the same amount of money, but it was noticeable that their families were more comfortably housed and better clothed.

May 26, 1863, Lieutenant Charles P. Eagan came from Fort Lapwai to be Acting Assistant Quartermaster.

November 5, 1863, Lieutenant Eagan was married to Miss Emma Johnson at the commanding officer's quarters. A splendid dinner followed the ceremony. This officer, as Commisary General, attained considerable notoriety in canned beef contracts during the Spanish War.

December 24, 1863, occurred a Military Ball at the Fort. All the people of the Valley were there, the Washington Volunteers trying to excel the California Volunteers' entertainment of the year before.

May 26, 1865, Captain F. O. McCown, with one company of Oregon Volunteers, relieved Major Rumrill and his command of two Companies of Washington Territory Volunteers, they going to Walla Walla.

November 9, 1865, Captain John S. Wharton, with one Company of sixty-two men, 14th United States Infantry, Regulars, arrived and relieved Captain McCown and his command, who went to Vancouver to be mustered out of service.

From this date until the abandonment of the Fort in September, 1882, it was garrisoned by Regular troops from different regiments with different officers, as follows:

October 17, 1867, Captain Geo. L. Browning, of the 7th United States Infantry, arrived and assumed command; then Lieutenant W. C. Manning of the 23rd United States Infantry.

September, 1869, Major John Eagan, 23rd United States Infantry, was commanding officer, followed by Captain Evan Miles, 21st United States Infantry.

Following these, I have no record in my journal of the officers commanding Fort Colville.

W. P. WINANS.